



ABDOMINAL CORE HEALTH
QUALITY COLLABORATIVE

ANNUAL REPORT

2023



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



This year marked a significant milestone for the ACHQC – our 10-year anniversary and celebration of a Decade of Data.

As the National Center on Charitable Statistics reports that one in three nonprofit organizations fail within the first 10 years of operation, our achievement as a Collaborative is significant and a testament to the power of working together with a common mission.

On behalf of the ACHQC Board of Directors, our surgeons and clinical care providers, the FDA and our Foundation Partners, I offer sincere thanks to our patients and their families who remain at the forefront of all our efforts.

I am incredibly proud and humbled by all we've accomplished. In 2012, a few hernia surgeons sat around a table brainstorming how to improve patient care and optimize cost within our healthcare setting. I doubt they could have imagined what we would later achieve.

Over the past decade, our Collaborative has raised awareness of the need for the collection of clinically relevant, real-world data and the immense value that can be gleaned from rigorous analyses of outcomes and collaborative learning. To highlight a handful of our many achievements:

- We have developed, managed, and grown our Registry into the nation's largest repository of real-world data on hernia repairs – securely housing millions of critical data points on over 125,000 cases.
- We have engaged with patients, forming a dedicated Patient Advocacy & Engagement Committee, to listen to their voices and feedback, helping us develop resources and strategies to enhance their surgical experience.
- We have worked collaboratively to share data-driven insights, with over 130 peer-reviewed publications and presentations of hundreds of clinical talks featuring ACHQC data at national conferences, online webinars and our annual Quality Improvement Summit.
- We have funded 10 resident & fellow research grants to support the growth and development of aspiring young surgeons focusing on abdominal core health.
- Through the concerted efforts of our Opioid Reduction Task Force, we have used data to help combat the opioid epidemic plaguing our country.
- We have recognized surgeons for their commitment to ongoing clinical quality improvement through our new ACHQC Verified Surgeon of Quality initiative.
- We have forged strong relationships at the federal level, including working with FDA, and taking a leadership role in the MDEpiNet Abdominal Core Health Coordinated Registry Network, making significant progress in developing unique methods to enhance post-market surveillance.
- Through prudent financial management, ACHQC offers access to the ACHQC Registry, quality improvement programs, and educational resources free of charge to abdominal core health teams and their patients.

Looking in the rearview mirror at how far we've traveled together in our first decade, it certainly hasn't always been a smooth road. Yet, we have remained focused on the path ahead. Our journey, which has been shaped by countless hours of hard work and unwavering commitment to a shared passion, continues.

We are excited to embark on our next decade, which will include strategic transformation and expansion of the ACHQC. I hope you'll join us for the ride.

With gratitude and thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Rosen". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Michael J. Rosen, MD

Abdominal Core Health Quality Collaborative



2013-2023

A Decade of Data



**SCAN for More
Information**

ONLINE DATA REGISTRY

- Digital Case Log for MOC & CMS Reporting
- On-Demand Outcomes Analysis
- Integrated Data Analytics
- Secure, Easy, & Confidential

UNRIVALED COLLABORATION

- Roughly 500 Leading Surgeons in Private & Academic Practices
- Ongoing Personal Quality Improvement
- Turn-Key Participation in Medical Research
- Data-Driven Opioid Reduction Initiatives
- Peer-to-Peer Engagement & Learning
- Annual Quality Improvement Summit

ENHANCE YOUR PRACTICE & SET YOURSELF APART

- Establish Yourself as a Hernia Leader in Your Region
- Contribute to Evidence Based Medicine & Drive Value
- Highlight Your Dedication to Quality Care & Improvement



@ACHQC

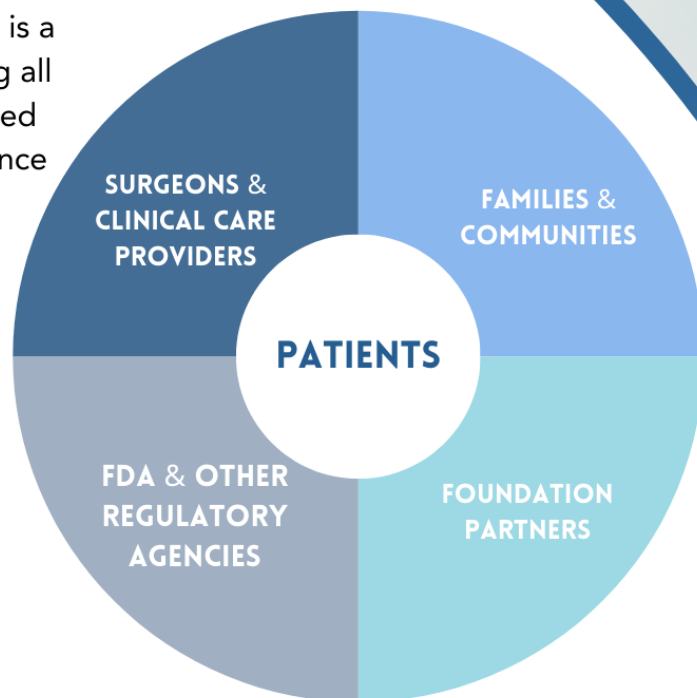


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OUR COLLABORATIVE

With our patients at the core of our mission, the ACHQC is a true collaborative that includes stakeholders representing all phases of the healthcare continuum. Using data and shared learning, we aim to improve surgical outcomes and enhance the overall patient experience.



FOLLOW ACHQC ON SOCIAL MEDIA

 @ABDOMINALCOREHEALTHQC

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MISSION

The mission of the ACHQC is to maximize the quality and value of health care for patients who suffer from hernia disease and diseases of the abdominal wall or abdominal core.

A DECADE OF DATA

where we started, where are we going

2013

- AHSQC is Founded
- Registry data entry begins with Ventral Hernias (July 1st)

2014

- 1,000 patient milestone

2015

- 5,000 patient milestone
- Ended year with 6,000+ patients

2016

- Established Resident & Fellow Research Grant
- Designated a Qualified Clinical Data Registry by CMS
- FDA joins Executive Council as *ex officio* members
- 10,000+ patient milestone

2017

- Inguinal Hernia Module expansion
- 20,000+ patient milestone
- Focus on Follow-up initiative

2018

- Inaugural Quality Improvement Summit
- Designated lead for federal Abdominal Core Health Coordinated Registry Network (CRN), spearheaded by the Medical Device Epidemiology Network (MDEpiNet)
- Opioid Reduction Task Force established
- ORACLE free online risk assessment tool established

2019

- Patient Pre-habilitation & Rehabilitation Protocols developed
- Launched free mobile app
- 50,000+ patient milestone
- Post-market surveillance initiative underway
- Pain Management Patient Educational Tool distributed

2020

- Transformed into Abdominal Core Health Quality Collaborative (ACHQC)
- Patient Advocacy & Engagement Committee established
- Virtual professional education session at AHS Annual Conference

2021

- 75,000+ patient milestone
- Joined National Health Council
- Distressed Community Index integrated with ACHQC Registry
- Launched monthly QC Core Insights virtual webinars

2022

- Surpassed 100,000 patients entered
- Exceeded 100 peer-reviewed publications
- QI Summit returns in-person

2023

- Exceeded 125,000 patient milestone
- Launched Verified Surgeon of Quality program
- 5th Annual QI Summit
- 10th Resident & Fellow Research Grant awarded

LEADERSHIP

ACHQC's Board of Directors is a diverse, dedicated team of nationally recognized thought-leaders who practice in private and academic settings across the country.



Michael Rosen, MD
President
ACHQC Medical Director



Benjamin
Poulouse, MD, MPH
Vice President
ACHQC Director of
Quality & Outcomes



Jeremy Warren, MD
Treasurer



William Hope, MD
Secretary



Ivy Haskins, MD



Rana Higgins, MD



Anthony Iacco, MD



Flavio Malcher, MD



Arielle
Perez, MD, MPH, MS



Clayton Petro, MD



Michael
Reinhorn, MD, MBA



Robert Yates, MD



Nicole Goddard
Executive Director
Privacy & Security



Aileen Beckler
ACHQC Program
Coordinator



Debbie Fenoglio
Patient Follow-up

COMMITTEES & TASK FORCES

COMMITTEE/ TASK FORCE	CHAIR(S)	MISSION
Compliance	Nicole Goddard	To ensure collaborative operations meet regulatory, legal, and current operational standards
Data Assurance	Benjamin Poulouse, MD, MPH	To assure completeness and accuracy of collaborative data
Data Integration	Bryan Ellis, DO	Improve usability and ROI for surgeons entering data into the QC
Data Use & Publications	Corey Deeken, PhD	To ensure fair and equitable access to collaborative data
Development	Michael Reinhorn, MD, MBA Nicole White, MD	To identify, explore and cultivate philanthropic opportunities to support the Collaborative's efforts to enhance patient care and improve abdominal core health.
Hiatal Hernia Task Force	Rebecca Petersen, MD, MSc	To identify appropriate variables and quality metrics related to hiatal hernia repair and lead development of a hiatal hernia module within the ACHQC Registry.
Membership Inclusivity Surgeon Outreach	Todd Harris, MD David Krpata, MD	Develop resources and programs to encourage and support diversity and inclusivity within the QC. Continually touch-base with surgeons in the QC to assure we are meeting their needs
Opioid Task Force	Michael Reinhorn, MD, MBA Clayton Petro, MD	Impact the opioid epidemic by reducing opioid prescribing and consumption. Partner with patients to set realistic expectations about postoperative pain and pain management
Patient Engagement & Advocacy	Harriet Schwartzman Eric Beauford	Identify key areas to improve patient outcomes and increase patient education
Quality Improvement	Luke Beffa, MD	Provide comprehensive, real-time ongoing assessment of improving quality within the QC. Identify annual Quality Improvement efforts to disseminate to the QC
Research	Mazen Al-Mansour, MBBS	Oversees and sets the agenda for Embedded Registry Studies and/or Multi-Center Prospective Studies
Residents & Fellows	Aldo Fafaj, MD Sergio Mazzola, MD	Enhance resident and fellow participation in the QC. Allow easy transition from residency/fellowship to attending and engagement in the QC
Variables & Definitions	Eric Pauli, MD Ajita Prabhu, MD	To maintain and update surgeon and patient user interfaces and variable definitions



DELIVERING VALUE TO OUR PATIENTS

The patient is at the core of all ACHQC activities. Through patient-centric, collaborative engagement and the work of our dedicated Patient Engagement & Advocacy Committee, ACHQC aims to enhance the alignment of patient and surgeon goals and expectations.

By openly sharing their experiences, patients contribute real-world perspectives that cannot be captured solely through the analysis of clinical data. These firsthand insights aid ACHQC surgeons, the FDA, and our industry partners in understanding the importance of a holistic view of abdominal core healthcare.

ACHQC provides patients and their care providers access to helpful resources, including patient-focused communications, education and support materials, advocacy programs, and research designed to identify areas to enhance their clinical outcomes and overall healthcare experience.

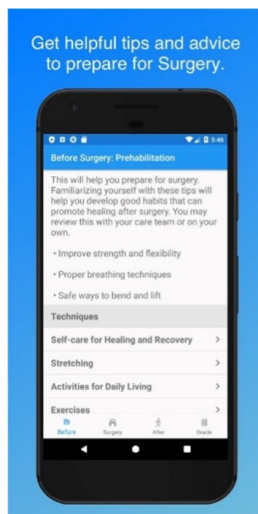
ACHQC offers these patient-focused, data-driven resources on-demand, across many platforms and shares them freely on our website, YouTube channel and the ACHQC mobile app.

The ACHQC mobile app includes information to help patients understand and set appropriate expectations before and after abdominal surgery. ACHQC prehabilitation and post-surgical rehabilitation guides include relevant information, exercise videos and lifestyle considerations across all stages of the healthcare journey – from pre-operative decision-making to post-operative recovery optimization.

The FREE ACHQC app is available for download in iOS and Android formats by searching "ACHQC" in the app store.

"It seems that the "hernia world" as a whole – mesh industry, surgeons, prehab and rehab – is moving in the right direction for more individualized care."

"Patient education is key. When patients are educated, they are empowered. And when they are empowered, they feel they have control over their bodies."



ACHQC
ABDOMINAL CORE HEALTH QUALITY COLLABORATIVE

NEW FOR HERNIA PATIENTS: Abdominal Core Health Mobile App

Featuring a Patient Portal with:

- Useful information for Before and After surgery
- Pain management strategies and opioid information
- Activities and Exercises to help with recovery - including diagrams and videos demonstrating proper technique

Learn about exercises to assist with recovering from Surgery

DOWNLOAD FOR FREE TODAY!

If you have any questions regarding your hernia surgery or care plan, contact your surgeon's office.

For more information on the ACHQC, contact www.achqc.org



ACHQC RESEARCH HELPS RECOGNIZE DIVERSE PATIENT EXPERIENCES

In 2021, ACHQC successfully linked the Distressed Communities Index (DCI) with ACHQC Registry data, allowing us to research health disparities and identify factors such as socioeconomic status and healthcare availability that can contribute to negative patient experiences.

By acknowledging and actively working to address disparities, ACHQC seeks to develop targeted strategies to help ensure all patients have equal access to high-quality care and are afforded similar opportunities for enhanced surgical outcomes.



Dr. Courtney Collins discusses the interaction of neighborhoods and environments in post-operative outcomes using the Distressed Communities Index (DCI).



Analyses of particularly high-risk populations, including veterans and elderly patients, demonstrated measurable differences in outcomes including post-operative complications and quality of life among those living in distressed communities. Increased barriers to care are evident in more distressed communities, leading to worse outcomes after ventral hernia repair.

2023 SPOTLIGHT: ACHQC VERIFIED SURGEON OF QUALITY

In May 2023, ACHQC introduced the Verified Surgeon of Quality program, designed to recognize the high quality of surgery being performed by surgeons within our Collaborative. An ACHQC Verified Surgeon of Quality demonstrates a commitment to track their outcomes within the ACHQC Registry and participates in ACHQC's continuous quality improvement programs, including the annual ACHQC QI Summit. Importantly, patients recognize that surgeons who focus on optimizing hernia surgical outcomes can provide an enhanced level of care.

Each month, ACHQC spotlights one of our Verified Surgeons for their dedication to improving the quality and value of patient care in their communities. Spotlights are featured on the Verified Surgeon of Quality webpage, in our QC Vision newsletter and across ACHQC's social media networks.



"My commitment to quality improvement sets me apart from my peers."

-ACHQC surgeon

"I'm really impressed by the efforts of the ACHQC surgeons... My advice to other patients is to find a surgeon who specializes in hernias who you feel comfortable with."

-ACHQC Patient Engagement and Advocacy Committee patient representative

Visit <https://achqc.org/faqs/verified-surgeons-of-quality> to view all of our surgeons of quality

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

2023 SPOTLIGHT: 5TH ANNUAL QI SUMMIT

ACHQC hosted our 5th Annual Quality Improvement Summit in March 2023 in Denver, CO. The QI Summit is a premier experience for all who are dedicated to continually improving the quality of care delivered to patients with abdominal core conditions. This highly anticipated meeting continues to grow, with over 80 attendees participating in the interactive and engaging weekend event.

The unique QI Summit program includes dedicated time for sharing real-world data and clinical outcomes, peer-to-peer mentoring, and networking with ACHQC stakeholders from across the country. Top-performers within the Collaborative shared their approaches to challenging clinical scenarios and offered data-driven considerations which can assist in planning a patient's pre-, peri-, and post-operative treatment course.

One of the QI Summit's hot topics was post-market surveillance of mesh and other medical devices used in hernia surgery and how the ACHQC can play a pivotal role in redefining post-market surveillance in the United States. A panel discussion dedicated to this challenging subject included speakers encompassing all ACHQC stakeholders including FDA leadership, surgeons, patients and industry partners.

ACHQC surgeons have the opportunity to participate in a study evaluating quality improvement in surgical training. Led by Caprice Greenberg, MD, MPH, this new model of professional development uses surgical peer coaching via a video-based collaborative learning methodology.

Additional details including summaries of the 2023 QI Summit sessions and many presentations are available online on our [website](#).

"I attended to connect with other surgeons."

"I wanted to get an understanding of new trends based on data from the QC."

2023 QI SUMMIT HOT TOPICS

- **Complex Situations in Hernia Repair**
- **Healthcare Disparity & Preoperative Optimization**
- **Parastomal & Paraesophageal Hernia Repair**
- **Inguinal Hernia Repair**
- **Outcomes in Robotic Surgery**
- **Technical Aspects of Hernia Prevention (Prophylaxis)**



*ACHQC Board Members attend the QI Summit.
Ariel Perez, MD; Micki Reinhorn, MD, MBA; Jeremy Warren, MD; Mike Rosen, MD; Rana Higgins, MD; William Hope, MD.*

Delaney Ding, BS, presents his study that was awarded the 2022 ACHQC Resident & Fellow Research Grant.



MENTORING SURGICAL RESIDENTS & FELLOWS

ACHQC encourages residents' and surgical fellows' active involvement in the Collaborative. Participation offers these trainees educational resources, accessibility to cutting-edge real-world research and mentorship with recognized leaders in the field of abdominal core health.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 10TH RESIDENT & FELLOW RESEARCH GRANT RECIPIENT!

Dr. Sara Maskal is the recipient of the 2023 ACHQC Resident & Fellow Research Grant. Dr. Maskal completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Washington before moving to Cleveland for both medical school and General Surgery residency. She currently works as a research fellow at Cleveland Clinic in the Center for Abdominal Core Health and is mentored by Dr. Clayton Petro. Dr. Maskal will present her project "A Modern Comparison of Suture Repair with Mesh Repair for Incisional Hernia" at the 2024 ACHQC Quality Improvement Summit.

PAST ACHQC RESIDENT & FELLOW RESEARCH GRANT RECIPIENTS

2022

DELANEY DING, BS

"Assessing the Impact of Individual Risk Factors in Predicting Surgical Outcomes of Ventral Hernia Repair: An Analysis Using the ACHQC Database"

2021

COLIN DELONG, MD

"Does Geographic Location of Hernia Patients Influence Access, Disparities, and Patient-Provider Communication in Current Hernia Care? An Abdominal Core Health Quality Collaborative (ACHQC) Analysis"

2020

RYAN LAMM, MD

"Are short-and long-term outcomes in cancer-related ventral incisional hernia repair worse than in the general population? An Abdominal Core Health Quality Collaborative (ACHQC) database study"

2018

ALDO FAFAJ, MD

"Registry-based, Randomized Controlled Trial Comparing Intra-operative Foley Catheter versus No Catheter for Minimally Invasive Inguinal Hernia Repair"

IBNALWALID SAAD, MD

"Perioperative Analgesia with Transversus Abdominis Plane (TAP) Block versus Epidural Analgesia: Analysis from the Americas Hernia Society Quality Collaborative"

2017

ANGELA KAO, MD

"Comparison of Outcomes After Partial (PME) versus Complete Mesh Excision (CME)"

LUCIANO TASTALDI, MD

"AHSQC-embedded Randomized Controlled Trial - Telescopic Dissection vs. Balloon Dissection for Laparoscopic TEP Inguinal Hernia Repair"

2016

THOMAS GAVIGAN, MD, MSC

"Prospective Cohort Study of Patients Undergoing Parastomal Hernia Repair Using the Americas Hernia Society Quality Collaborative"

IVY HASKINS, MD

"Development and Validation of a Ventral Hernia Decision Support Tool Using the AHSQC"

ACHQC RESIDENT & FELLOWS COMMITTEE PRESENTS – "QC UNCUT" VIDEO SERIES

This year, the ACHQC Residents & Fellows Committee spearheaded a new collaborative educational program – "QC Uncut" which premiered in July 2023. QC Uncut is a series of technically focused educational episodes including uncut videos narrated by an operating surgeon with a resident/fellow asking questions during the procedure. Seasoned mentors share clinical insights and help residents understand nuances of decision-making in surgery, while developing technical proficiency and learning techniques to refine their surgical skills.

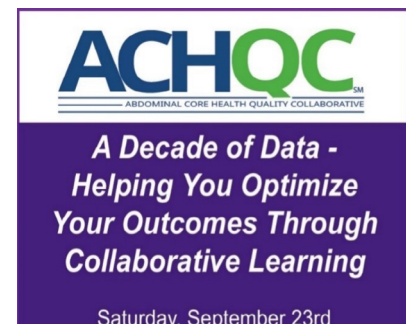
QC Uncut episodes and all ACHQC content are available on our [YouTube Channel](#).

DATA DRIVEN RESEARCH

Over the years, the ACHQC has streamlined and optimized the process for collecting data within embedded registry studies. To date, there have been 15 embedded studies within the ACHQC registry designed to answer key research questions impacting surgical outcomes.

RESEARCH STUDIES EMBEDDED WITHIN THE ACHQC REGISTRY

- Heavy Weight Versus Medium Weight Mesh in Ventral Hernia Repair
- Telescopic Dissection vs. Balloon Dissection in Laparoscopic TEP inguinal hernia repair
- Laparoscopic vs. Robotic Ventral Hernia Repair with IPOM
- Exparel vs. Bupivacaine Hydrochloride vs. Placebo for Postoperative Analgesia after Open Retromuscular Hernia Repair
- Foley vs No Foley for Laparoscopic Inguinal Hernia Repair
- Randomized Control Trial Comparing Transfascial Suture for Mesh Fixation to No Mesh Fixation
- Sugarbaker vs Keyhole for Parastomal Hernias
- Reducing Infection at the Surgical Site with Antibiotic Irrigation during Ventral Hernia Repair (RINSE Trial)
- Comparing eTEP and Laparoscopic Intraperitoneal Onlay Mesh (IPOM) for Ventral Hernias
- Pilot Trial of Abdominal Core Rehabilitation To Improve Outcomes After Ventral Hernia Repair
- The effect of intraoperative music on pain in patients undergoing ventral hernia repair with mesh: a double-blind randomized controlled trial
- Microlyte in Prevention of SSI After Open Ventral Hernia Repair (Prisma Health-Upstate)
- Robotic retromuscular vs. Open retromuscular Ventral Hernia Repair (ROVHR)
- Preoperative weight loss for open abdominal wall reconstruction
- No Opioids vs. Minimal Opioids Following Inguinal Hernia Repair



SHARING INSIGHTS FROM REAL-WORLD RESEARCH

ACHQC presented "A Decade of Data - Helping You Optimize Your Outcomes Through Collaborative Learning" at the 2023 annual American Hernia Society meeting in Austin, TX.

Moderated by ACHQC Board Members Flavio Malcher, MD and Arielle Perez, MD, presentations focused on the value of robust data tracking, collaborative learning, and outcome optimization. Clinical talks included:

- *Preoperative Optimization: What Really Improves Outcomes?*
Mazen Al-Mansour, MBBS
- *What Have We Learned About the Best Approach for Routine Ventral Hernia Repairs?*
Courtney Collins, MD
- *Does the Plane We Place Mesh Really Matter?*
Clayton Petro, MD
- *Postoperative Pain Management - Getting the Best Outcomes for Your Patients*
Jeremy Warren, MD





PEER REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

The ACHQC Registry is regarded globally as a trusted source of comprehensive, clinically relevant data. In 2023, 27 peer-reviewed papers were published in high-impact journals, bringing the total number of publications utilizing ACHQC data to 143.

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Through partnerships and shared commitment to our mission, the ACHQC continues to thrive. The ACHQC welcomes interested individuals, corporations, foundations, and hospital organizations involved in managing hernia disease and diseases of the abdominal wall and core, to partner with us on our journey to enhance patient care. Many contribute countless hours of their time which is priceless. Others contribute financial support that allows us to offer our Registry and educational materials free of charge to clinicians, patients, and care providers. We thank and recognize all who have contributed and supported ACHQC in 2023.

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